I am writing to voice my opposition to the proposed Microsoft anti-trust settlement. The settlement is inadequate in several areas, but in particular is the disclosure of the Application Programming Interfaces (API's) in Microsoft products.

The provision of the settlement dealing with disclosure of the API's does NOT provide adequate language to enforce full-disclosure, nor does it even require full-disclosure. The language is too tightly worded such that it limits exactly what Microsoft must document to other developers. It lists specific Microsoft programs and operating systems that are required to be publicly documented in regards to the API, but this is not satisfactory.

Most noticeably missing from the API disclosure list is Microsoft SQL Server, which is their flagship database server. Microsoft has been using their desktop monopoly to leverage their server software, which has been succeeding to the detriment of competition from other server products. If allowed to continue, this illegal practice will allow Microsoft to further force its insecure server software onto consumers. What happens if most Fortune 500 businesses have to run SQL Server and a bug/vulnerability is found in that software? The core businesses that are the landmark of commerce in this country will be left vulnerable to hackers worldwide. That would be an embarrassment to this country.

Another problem with the settlement is that, by specifying specific software names and versions, you allow Microsoft to simply rename/rebrand products after the settlement goes into effect and therefore circumvent the API disclosure protections. Consider what happens if they were to rename Windows Media Player to "Windows Media Runner" or something else? It is no longer the same official product, therefore not bound to the API disclosure protections.

I will not even go into the problems this creates in regards to Microsoft.NET. .NET is a "next generation" platform that, if not properly documented publicly, will yet again lock people into Microsoft products. This is already happening because Windows XP has .NET capabilities already included. This is simply scary.

To fix this, you would have to remove the restrictive language from the settlement and have Microsoft release the API for ALL of their operating systems, regardless of middleware/applications. By restricting API disclosure to middleware/operating-system combinations, you are giving Microsoft a way around any sort of API disclosure requirement built-into the settlement.

What people are missing through-out this trial is that an operating system is simply a foundation for computing. It provides the structure for which to run/build other applications. If Microsoft keeps secret the part of the foundation that is the strongest and uses it only for their applications (secret API's), then competitors start off at an EXTREME disadvantage. That's what this boils down to and Microsoft knows this.

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